

LETTERS

TO THE

Roman Catholics

OF

IRELAND.

LONDON.

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1825.

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# LETTERS

TO THE

## *Roman Catholics of Ireland.*

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### LETTER I.

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“ And if we do but watch the hour,  
“ There never yet was human power  
“ Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
“ The patient search, and vigil long,  
“ Of him who treasures up a wrong.”

LORD BYRON.

IN a *Register* of Cobbett's, published about the time that Mr. Canning accepted of his present office, there is the following passage:—

“ There is *one* man, in particular, and if that one should at last see, that, to attain the height of his ambition, the *patient* course is the best; if he should at last see, that time will give him all he wants; if he can restrain himself in endeavouring to *outstrip time*; if he should at last see this; and if he should *wait for the occasion to attack*, rather than seek to *create* the occasion, &c. &c., Mr. Canning will then fall before him, as a baby, &c.”

A maxim of much *general* wisdom may be drawn from the observation in the above *particular* instance.

“ I BIDE MY TIME,” is the motto given by Sir Walter Scott to the Arms of the reduced Catholic family of Ravenswood\*, who were plundered, “ according to the Statute for that purpose made and provided,” by the Protestant Sir William Ashton, the Lord Keeper.

Therefore *wait* your time, do not *force* it, should be the general rule in all political efforts ; particularly where the attack is to be made by those who have been stripped of their natural rights and of their social station, upon those who have possessed themselves of the spoils.

Again—when the attack is to be made upon those who, being possessed of power, may be considered as the garrison of a fortification, erected according to all rules of art, another maxim of prudence must be, that the attack should never proceed upon a *direct line* or upon open ground.

The zig-zag approaches and the double sap of a besieging army afford a visible delineation of this policy.

Ajax was a brave man, and a dull fellow, yet he knew the advantage of a shield covered with seven bulls’ hides.

The Catholics of Ireland, the ousted and oppressed party, have violated the above rule, both in its principle and in its consequences.

First, They did not “bide their time.”

Second, when they had it, they were duped out of their opportunity.

Third, They always made a direct and unprotected attack, instead of an oblique and covered approach.

Examine these in their order :

The Catholics did not, and would not, “ *bide their time*”—they would “ outstrip it”—they

\* Bride of Lammermoor.

would not "wait for the occasion"—they would "create it."

In the year 1783, when the Volunteer Convention sat at the Rotunda, the strength of that Convention lay in the *unanimity* of their Volunteer Constituents.

These Volunteer Constituents consisted of Catholics and *Protestants*, who had been brought to an *unanimity* of view, by objects *common* to both, having been held out to them, viz. :—The destruction of the usurped power of the British Parliament to make laws to bind the kingdom of Ireland, and also an internal Reform in the mode of Election for the House of Commons of Ireland.

These two were objects *common* to *all* Irishmen, and, therefore, *all* Irishmen *combined* to attain them. In the first, and at that time, the boldest attempt, they succeeded, from the strength of their combination. The last remained, but was in progress.

Mr. Flood was directed by the Convention to bring into the House of Commons a Bill for the Reform of the Representation.

The Catholics were urged by some precipitate, and by some designing men, to seize the crisis as a fit opportunity to insist that their admission to the exercise of the Elective Franchise should be included in this Bill.

Some of the friends of the Catholics, more calm than the one, and more sincere than the other class of advisers, recommended patience and silence to the Catholics. In short, to "*bide their time.*"

It was urged to them, that the Protestant leaders, to whom the support of the Bill for Parliamentary Reform had been intrusted, were not prepared with materials, so digested, as to enforce the addition of the Catholic claims. It was urged that the minds of those men were not sufficiently enlarged to grasp, on a sudden, so liberal a policy; they were in a state only approaching to it. Time must be given

to them. It was urged, that the influence of those leaders might, if they should prove reluctant in the measure, produce a schism; and that the whole force of the reforming party consisted in the *cordial union* of *Catholics* and *Protestants*. The Catholics were besought to stand to their arms, and keep silence. It was pointed out to them, that if the Protestant leaders succeeded with their Bill, the restoration of the Catholic rights would be a necessary consequence of a Reform in Parliament. Such a system could not, in practice, stand for a moment, without a diffusion of the rights of Voting and of Representation.

To some of the advisers of this last line of conduct, it was privately, but well known, that Government had come to a determination, that *if* the question of Parliamentary Reform should be carried, the right of voting should be made general.

It had been clearly perceived, that the Government could not stand upon a reformed Parliament, (*i. e.* a destruction of the Boroughs,) with a mere Protestant right of voting. Such a plan, it was perceived, would destroy the influence of the Aristocracy in the Counties. This was not chosen. Subsequent events have shown the sagacity of this opinion. The right of voting has, since that period, been extended to the Catholics. The extension has increased the influence of the Aristocracy.

The Catholics, perhaps impatient, did not abide by this advice. They urged their claims *instantly*, and in a peremptory manner. The then Protestant leaders started, and backed. The schism commenced. The Catholics threatened to withdraw, and did withdraw their numbers, from the Volunteer ranks. The strength of the party was broken. The courage of the Government revived. The Bill was rejected. The Convention dissolved. The Volunteers were no more heard of. The

cause of IRELAND was lost—that of the *Catholics* was not gained.

Here then the Catholics did not “*bide their time*”—nor does their conduct upon this review, rendered sober by time, coincide with the principle of the advice, the sound advice, given to Mr. Brougham by Mr. Cobbett.

In the next most important period of the Catholic progress, *the critical time had arrived*. The Catholics were then *duped* out of their opportunity. The Union was proposed by a daring, a profligate, and a rash man, Mr. Pitt.

The Union was opposed both by Catholic and Protestant. It was a *common object*, and the opposition to a Parliamentary Union with England, would have been a bond of social and moral Union to the *People of Ireland*.

Mr. Pitt saw this: rash, daring, and profligate, as he was, the *purchase* of a *small* majority in the Parliament of Ireland, constituted, as it had long been, would have been too frail a bark in which to trust his freight of union, in the rough and stormy atmosphere of the whole *People* of Ireland united in opposition.

He was aware of this. He, therefore, applied himself to the *peculiar* interests, and limited views of *one party* only. He held out Emancipation to the Catholics as the recompense of a *separation* of their *peculiar* interests, from the *common interests* of the *whole* Irish People.

He said to them, and committed himself in writing, that if the Catholics of Ireland would support the Union, the Parliament of England would support their Emancipation.

For the sake of gaining their *particular* object as Catholics, the Catholics yielded the general object of Ireland.

The Union was carried. It was the boon of the Catholics to their native Country.

But this promise to the Catholics, the consideration for the Union, was then broken with as little remorse as it had been made. The Catholics of Ireland, greater in number and wealth than the North American Colonies when they emancipated themselves; greater in number and wealth than the acting inhabitants of South America, in their just ended contest for emancipation—placed, in number, wealth, and position, above any of these glorious and fortunate strugglers, the Catholics of Ireland stand marked in Europe as the *dupes* to the deceit of a profligate intriguer in a bigotted Court, the disposition of which to prayer did not seem to diminish the disposition to profit by the effects of the involution of the liar in the Minister.

Since the year 1800, the time when, by their having yielded themselves up and their country as the *dupes* of Mr. Pitt, what has been the conduct and position of the Catholics of Ireland?

Under the advice of Mr. Peter Finnerty, they betook themselves to the custom of an *annual* petition, and have become habituated to the humiliation of an *annual* rejection.

Who were the humble Petitioners?

Nearly 6,000,000 of a gallant and hardy race, inhabiting one of the most fertile soils, under the mildest climate, and in *the strongest relative position of any country in Europe*.

What, and who was the party receiving the HUMBLE petition?

The Legislature, as to the majority of its effective arm of representatives, returned by fifteen or sixteen thousand foreigners belonging to obscure towns or villages in a neighbouring island, and generally acting, in their localities, under the influence of some jobbing patron.

The word "foreigner" is here taken in a moral, not in a *legal* acceptation.



Unhappily, in Ireland, these two meanings are sometimes the reverse of each other. By the word "foreigner" in a moral sense, is here intended, a person born and residing in a distinct portion of the globe ; and, from his education and his disposition, deeming himself to have a distinct and separate interest.

Ireland and England are two islands ; they are, therefore, distinct portions of the globe.

That the inhabitants of England consider themselves as having interests distinct from the interests of Ireland, may be proved from every volume of the Statute Book of England.

The spirit of Legislature which could enact, "That any Irishman, who should lay down his own wool, shorn from the backs of his own sheep, fed on his own farm, if such farm were near the banks of a navigable river, should be liable to heavy pains and penalties, and might be tried for the same in any county in England ;" the spirit of such a Legislature as to Ireland, needs no comment.

From a continuance of such instances for six hundred years, it is a necessary inference, that the interests, feelings, and habits of two such countries should be distinct.

But distinct portions of the globe, and distinct, nay opposing interests, constitute, morally speaking, *foreign* relations.

The name of Ireland, in the Statute Book of England, may, like the path of a wounded man, be traced by the blood which marks it.\* Yet to such a Legislature, so residing in a distinct portion of the globe, and so inveterately distinguished by distinct interests, feelings, and habits, did the Catholics of Ireland submit their fortunes and their honor ; and subsequently, and annually, " Bend low, and in a bondsman's key, with 'bated breath, and whispering humbleness, say thus"—

\* Letters of Causidicus, 1779.

What followed from this "whispering humbleness?"

A farce—a showman's exhibition, held up to the eyes of Europe for twenty-two years, on which the Catholics of Ireland were the gaping and credulous gazers, until a certain Sir Francis, in 1823, by throwing a squib amongst the antics, displayed the fraudulent machinery, and gave to the Catholics of Ireland 311 Witnesses to prove the miserable tricks by which they had been led on, had been amused, and had been abused, for a longer period than is usually calculated on the life of man. At the pyrotechnic touch of the wizard—not Michael Scott, but Sir Francis—the "goblin page" of the fable dropped his human disguise, and even, in the midst of his pandemonium evolving, the gaunt and cunning fiend, leaped from his seat muttering, lost! lost! lost!

Will the Catholics again petition? Since the above has been written the Catholics have again (1824,) petitioned. But their case has not excited even a debate. Even their best trained draft horses refuse. Will the Catholics again petition? The answer to this question will require caution in the promulgation, and deliberation in the adoption.

## LETTER II.

“ Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
“ Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime.  
“ Above the far Atlantic she has taught  
“ Her Esau-brethren, that the haughty flag,  
“ The floating fence of Albion’s feeblèr crag,  
“ May strike to those, whose red right hands have bought  
“ Rights, cheaply earned with blood.

——— better be

“ Where the extinguished Spartans still are free,  
“ In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,  
“ Than stagnate in our marsh.”

LORD BYRON.

**WILL** the Catholics again PETITION?

The caution necessary in the promulgation of the answer to this question will be best exercised by inquiring, whether history affords us an example of any nation, whose fate has placed it, at any period of its progress, in a situation similar to Ireland, ‘past and present.’

The nation of the Cossagues, possessing the fertile country surrounding the rivers Don and Volga, fell, it matters not now to relate here how, under the dominion of the Great Autocrat of all the Russias.

The nation of the Irish, possessing an island reared on the bosom of the Atlantic, the favourite child of her booming waters, as fertile in its soil as the banks of the Don and Volga, fell, it matters not now to relate how, under the dominion of the Great Autocracy of all England.

The Great Autocrat of all the Russias, under whose dominions the Cossagues were included, was a ruthless barbarian, stained perhaps with every vice, except the canting pretension to a civilization and morality, which, as he did not possess, he scorned to assume.

The Great Autocracy of all England was not, at least if its own assertion of its own virtues is to be implicitly believed, a ruthless barbarian. The Great Autocracy of all England proclaimed itself the virtuous instrument of civilization.

But materials, physical or moral, cannot be brought into new combinations without first obtaining a mastery over them. To obtain this mastery, the experiments of Sir HUMPHREY DAVY prove, that the surest method is, to reduce his materials, at least as far as it is possible, to their *lowest* or primitive elements. He either *grinds* his materials to an impalpable powder, or subjects them, by the process of ignition, to a merely atomical existence.

The Great Autocracy of all England, in proceeding to gain the *mastery* over the materials of Ireland, for the purpose, no doubt, of forming them into a perfect combination of civil society, proceeded by the double process of Sir HUMPHREY DAVY. It first ground the physical properties of the Irish to powder, and then subjected their moral qualities to the ordeal of fire, by kindling the flame of religious discord in every quarter of the island. This scientific and preliminary process of civilization has been continuing for nearly seven hundred years. It has now probably arrived to its access, the precursor of moral dissolution.

But as the process of reduction, by *grinding* and *burning*, has been going on for nearly seven hundred years, it cannot reasonably be expected, that the recombination of these reduced elements should be completed in a less period of time than

has been taken for their previous preparation ; so that, in about fourteen hundred years from the day of the feast of St. Luke, in the year 1171,\* those of our posterity, who may chance to be born in this island, will, probably, draw their first breath in a land just rising into civil order.

The process of subjection, or mastery, put into execution on the Cossaque nation, by those *ruthless barbarians*, the Autocrats, in succession, of all the Russias, must probably have been different from the modes adopted on the Irish nation by the Autocracy of all England.

In order to discover the specific differences of those two processes, induced by similar commencements of power, it will be right to trace their progress in the order of modern philosophy ; that is, by first observing *effects* ; and, having carefully ascertained effects, by the application of a rigid analysis, to follow up and disclose the causes.

As the state of society, in any nation, is now admitted to be an effect of the mode of its Government, so the nature of the Government of the Autocrat of all the Russias, as it operates on the Cossaque nation, will be best known by resorting to the most recent and the most authentic account of the present state of that interesting race of men.

SIR ROBERT WILSON, a General in the British army, who resided for a considerable period in Russia, and became, in the course of his military occupations there, individually and nationally acquainted with the Cossagues, has given to the world his observations on the military and civil state of this nation, whose name is now familiar in Europe.

A few extracts from his work † will give to the

\* The day of the landing in Ireland of Henry the Second, the bodily concentration and executive instrument, or instrument of execution of the Autocracy of all England.

† Character and composition of the Russian Armies, by Sir Robert Wilson—Quarto edition, 1810, p. 25, &c.

reader some useful information on moral and political effects and causes :

“ The Cossagues,” says Sir ROBERT WILSON, “ are a description of troops, peculiar to the Russian army, and amalgamated in the Russian Empire ; these natives of the Don and the Volga still preserve a *constitutional independence*, which is possessed by none of the other provinces of Russia. Regulated by *their own laws*, exempt from taxes, and governed under the immediate authority of their own Attaman or Chief, *chosen from among themselves* ; they are relieved from all impositions of conquest, but the obligation of every male to serve, gratuitously, for five years, with the Russian armies, and some interior services connected with their own Police. Blessed with a country of rich plains and noble rivers, which nature covers with the glorious canopy of a fine climate and fills with redundant food, the Cossaque still maintains his warlike character, and unites with the most enthusiastic admiration of his country, and a disposition to profit of its enjoyments, the ambition of martial service, and an errant spirit of adventurous and foreign enterprise.

“ In the land which gave him birth, he is the peaceful and civilized inhabitant, natural in his affections, and domestic in his habits ; but, in other countries, he is the lawless Scythian, respecting no property nor rights.

“ Proud of his national comparative freedom, he bears himself as one conscious of superiority and privilege ; and yet, he tempers the haughty sense of these advantages with an Asiatic grace of manner that renders the expression inoffensive to his associates, and grateful to the stranger.

“ The Cossagues remain a people, with the worth to deserve and the resolution to maintain

“ their freedom, or *sacrifice themselves in the effort.*”

“ In the qualities of private character, the Cossaque is to no man inferior: affectionate in his family, faithful to his friend, hospitable to the stranger, and generous to the distressed; with a graceful simplicity of manners, and a candour that commands confidence. His military virtues are splendid in common with the Russian nation; but hereditary habits of war, and, perhaps, a natural talent for that species of it in which they are engaged, adds an acute intelligence and capacity which is not generally shared.”

“ Mounted on a very little, ill-conditioned, but well-bred horse, which can walk at the rate of five miles an hour, or, in his speed, dispute the race with the swiftest; with a short whip at his wrist, (he wears no spur,) armed with his lance, a pistol at his girdle, and a sword, he never fears a competition in single combat; but, in the late war, he irresistibly attacked every opposing squadron in the field. Terror preceded his charge, and in vain *discipline* endeavoured to present an impediment to the protruding pikes.”

“ The Cossaque officers are by no means ignorant or devoid of manners; and education is rapidly extending; but their application to the French language is not congenial to Russian interests.”

“ Amongst the common Cossagues is also frequently found a chivalresque spirit, a delicate sense of honour, that would grace the very age of chivalry, and be worthy of the records that eternize illustrious actions of fidelity and valour.”

Yet the Cossagues, so truly described by Sir Robt. Wilson, live under the domination, the *cruel tyranny* of the Autocrat of all the Russias.

But the Irishman, so truly described by Mr. Wakefield, Mr. Curwen, and Mr. Owen, lives—and his ancestors, for nearly seven hundred years,

did live—under the glories and *blessings* of the British Constitution—‘*the envy of surrounding nations.*’

As these two races, the Cossagues and the Irish, live under Governments so totally different from each other, the effects, upon the character of the races, should show an equally marked difference.

And so they do.

The Cossaque, *in the land which gave him birth*, “is the peaceful and civilized inhabitant, natural in his affections, and domestic in his habits; but *in other countries*, he is the lawless Scythian, respecting no property nor rights.”

Now, the Irishman is, as he, living under the glory and *blessing* of the British Constitution, necessarily must be, directly the *reverse* of this—‘*in the land which gave him birth*’ he is ‘frequently found the lawless Scythian, respecting no property nor rights. But in *other countries* he is the peaceful and civilized inhabitant, natural in his affections, and domestic in his habits.’

*Illustrative contrast to the Cossaque!* A celebrated Continental writer has put the following observations in an interrogatory form—“What vicious habit can be mentioned, what practice contrary to good faith, what crime, even the origin and first cause of which may not be traced in the *legislative institutions and prejudices* of the country, in which we observe such habit, such practice, or such crime to be committed?”

Such are the effects arising from the different forms, and different modes of administering forms, of Government—the glory, the BLESSING of the British Constitution, and the *horrible despotism* of the Autocrat of all the Russias!

But has the Cossaque been holding in his hand, for twenty years, HUMBLE PETITIONS to the Autocrat of all the Russias?

No. The Cossaque possesses and enjoys, by other means, the charter of his freedom.



What are its securities—the sources of his civilization, of his affections, of his domestic habits?

Externally, his pike and his horse. Internally, loyalty as a subject, courage as a man, integrity as a citizen. The roll of an *humble petition* never filled his hand.

The word *petition* cannot, in the Cossaque language, find a term synonymous.

This position of the Cossaque nation, and this honorable peculiarity of the Cossaque character, throw light upon the otherwise dark policy of extended Empire.

They show that it is possible for a nation dependent, in one sense, as a Member of Empire, to maintain, as to all internal circumstances, a perfectly uncontrolled *domestic independence*.

Is the Cossaque aggrieved by the supreme Government? The Cossaque neither petitions nor remonstrates. He represents. This Attaman is his representative, who, while he rationally states to his Autocrat the grievance of his Country, rigidly preserves the forms of respect due to Sovereignty, yet maintains the dignity of a Prince, supported in his claim by the power of *an armed nation*, moderated and directed by its virtue and its loyalty.

But, it may be said, the Cossaque is subject to military service. Yes. The tribute it is his pride to pay. Without the opportunity for such a contribution, the Cossaque would deem himself disgraced; but in payment of such a contribution, his term of service was limited, and its nature qualified by law; and he knows (no man better) that the roll of an HUMBLE PETITION would not, in his hand, be quite as effective an instrument, either for the protection of his civil liberty, on the vigour of his military service, as his pike.

See the Cossaque with his Attaman! His Attaman addresses him, and gives his *orders*; but,

his *orders* as to his comrade and friend; orders, the tone of which, induce duteous compliance rather than command servile submission. The Cossaque answers with that courteous dignity, which marks, as strongly his own proud self-respect, as it does the consciousness of an affectionate duty, in his own voluntary obedience—his duty not his servility.

See the *Irish Peasant*, before his Landlord, the Justice, or the Proctor! But hold! No; we will not look at it.

His rags, his wretchedness, his abasement are too revolting even for abstract contemplation.

An ounce of civit, good Apothecary, to sweeten my imagination."

Will the Catholics again PETITION?

There is not any intendment here of a suggestion that they should not.

It is a FORM—excused, if not justified, by usage.

But if they should determine so to do, would it not be, right, under the light which the Cossaque comparison beams upon their hitherto benighted course, for them to consider, whether the prayer of their HUMBLE PETITION ought not to be, '*that the Irish Nation might be appointed Cossagues to the Composite Autocracy of all England.*'

And as an outrigger to their shattered vessel of Petition, they might add an humble Address to his Majesty (perhaps their only friend,) that he would be graciously pleased to apply to his dear brother the Autocrat of all the Russias, to send over a *ready-made* Attaman, in order to accelerate the progress of Irish Civilization:

## LETTER III.

*Errat longe mea quidem sententia,*

*Qui imperium credat gravius esse aut stabilius,*

*Vi quod fit, quam illud quod amictia adjungitur*

TERENTIUS.

*Metus et terror infirma vincula caritatis.*—TACITUS.

THE advice given in the two former numbers of this Address, will not, probably, be followed. It cannot have the sanction of the name of Mr. Peter Finnerty. Poor Peter Finnerty is dead. The Catholics, therefore, will not *petition* to be appointed Cossagues to the Autocracy of all England.

But they will *petition* for what they have been pleased to call their Emancipation; that is, for the removal of certain legal bars, by which any individual who has had the honor, and the misfortune, to have been born an Irishman, and to profess the Catholic Religion, is now precluded from the hope of enjoying, the *profit* annexed to the appointment to certain offices in the gift of the Autocracy of England. The profit alone is adverted to, as it will be demonstrated, that holding such offices from a Power, having acted in Ireland, as that Autocracy has acted, would, to any *Irishman* be any thing but *honor*.

Let it now be supposed, that the Catholics of Ireland have *petitioned* the Autocracy of England for their Emancipation. Let it further be supposed (the Act is within the limits of POSSIBILITY,)

that the Autocracy of England in some freak of legislation, should have granted the prayer of that petition.

What will follow?

The answer is here given without hesitation.

That if Emancipation *alone* should be the prayer of that Petition, and if the haughty compliance be *limited* to that prayer, the doom of Ireland, to that degradation in which she has been held for six hundred years, and in which she still continues, will be sealed for a further time, the close of which, no human sagacity can now foresee.

This is stated as a proposition enunciated, the proof of which is now to be unfolded. The degradation of the Catholics of Ireland, (a degradation when inflicted, a disgrace when borne,) is an *effect* of some cause. Catholic degradation did not, in Ireland, create itself. Catholic degradation then, not being self-created, must have some *cause*. Whence came that cause? Does it still exist, or has it been removed? Or, will the grant of Emancipation *alone* remove it? These questions must be answered before the subject can be understood. To answer them we must try back, and advert to the series of transactions, through which the Autocracy of England had attained its domination in Ireland.

In reverting to the sad tale of Ireland, it is impossible, at this moment, not to be caught by its similarity to the story of modern Greece.

In a copy of the Provisional Constitution lately adopted by the Greeks, as published by Murray, there is the following paragraph:—

“ It is not true that the Greek People ever signed its own sentence of Slavery. From the date of the conquest, to the dawn of the Revolution, it was in a state of permanent insurrection, though continually quelled.”

Change but one word in the quotation, (for Greek, read Irish,) and the assertion is as true of

the one as of the other. Of both it may be said—often defeated but never *subdued*—both seem to have adopted, as a national motto, the answer that Palafox, amid the ruins of his Zaragoza, gave to the rapacious and disciplined invaders of his country :—

*Guerra al Cuchillo.*—PALAFOX.

But nations have been reduced to a double mode of slaughter. War—first in the field, and then, the bow-string and the rope. In Greece, according to the Firman—in Ireland, “according to the Statute in such case made and provided.”

Upon such statement, (*The Quarterly Review*, No. 60, August, 1824, p. 518,) an authority, in a certain quarter, not to be disputed, has some observations worthy of remembrance :—In civil “wars the very name of treason ought to be “especially avoided. They whose partizans suffer “punishment of treason, must, in turn, inflict it, “and *retaliation*, once at work, will overthrow “judicial difficulties, till executions are aggravated into murders, and thence multiplied into “massacres.”

How far the Norman blood, which seized upon, and transmitted in legitimate succession, the throne and aristocracy of England, has afforded a precedent of the policy, equally wise and humane, of *The Quarterly Review*, let the internal civil wars of England, the civil wars of Ireland, and the civil (and happily, *revolutionary*) war of America, “testify and declare.”

The Turks attacked the Greeks with the same feeling that the English attacked the Irish. The appetite for plunder was the stimulant in the Turkish and the English hordes, at the respective periods of the invasions of Greece and Ireland.—Nor was Henry II. inferior to Mahomet II. in courage or cruelty. The same holy zeal, or holy hypocrisy, was adopted by both, as the cloak of

violence. The crescent and the cross have been equally and uniformly the standards of the robber and the murderer. Mahomet marched under the command of the Koran. Henry under the command of the Vicar of Christ—both marching to slaughter, unchecked by mercy. The Bull of Adrian was applied *ad pios usus* by Henry, as Constantinople was seized by Mahomet. In the name of the High Teacher of mercy and charity to all Christians. Henry *purchased* from Adrian, for a valuable consideration, a title to the blood of the inhabitants, and to the land of Ireland—and amply did Henry and his successors, until the coming of his namesake, the Eighth in number, enjoy and revel in the profit of the purchase.

In the time of Henry the Eighth, a new mode of plunder opened in Ireland. The Irish having, by the influence or the despotism of Henry the Second, placed themselves under the spiritual dominion of the See of Rome, a pretence for plunder by the instrument of religion, did not exist. All was uniform as to religion. But Henry the Eighth wished that the Pope should grant his holy permission to the King of England to commit fornication—no, not to commit fornication, but, in order to avoid the sin of fornication, to commit murder as often as he listed.

The Pope refused, or delayed. Hence, from the brain of Harry Jove sprung the modern Minerva, the *Church* of England and Ireland; and, like the ancient Minerva, came forth to protect, by the *Gorgan* shield, the spiritual as well as the temporal supremacy of her *legitimate* Parent in the commission, or of murder, or of fornication, as often as he listed. Hands steeped in blood, traced, in *rubrick* character, not merely the forms, but the essential mysteries, of a new-born Christian Church—born of the brain of a *Murderer*.

Hence, in English domination, the mystical union of Church and State—like two overcharg-

ed tipplers, endeavouring to buttress each other in their mutual staggering.

The first effect of this mystical union in the person of a Murderer, was an extension of the Royal prerogative, by the King being enabled, "according to the statute in that case made and "provided," to avoid the crime of fornication by the commission of murder—a mode of compounding for crime unusual in the laws of England, or limited to Royal prerogative merely. It being the more general policy of that law to adopt the *honest* mode of punishing one crime, by holding out a reward for the perpetration of a greater.

Such was the birth and parentage of a *Reformed Church*, and her immaculate union with the *State* of England, forming, not two powers, but one mystical, divine and human, incorporeal, yet incorporated power.

The mystical union was fed in its growth—in Ireland, first, by the robbery of all that belonged to the Catholic Church—that ancient Catholic Church having been overturned, without the conversion of its followers, by the domination of England.

Secondly, by robbery succeeding robbery, from the year 1537, to the close of the Revolution of 1688, of all that was lay property, not only of the Irish by descent, but of those who were descended from the first English settlers and acquirers—the crime of this last class—its social connexions by affinity, by manners, and by religion, with their countrymen, the native Irish. *English Reformation*, hesitating not, in its *saturnine* progress, to play the cannibal on its own offspring—of all this, the *purpose* plunder—the *pretence*, the safety and establishment of the *Reformed Church*—as an accessory to that safety, the transfer of property from the hands of the rightful owners, the Catholics, to the custody of bigoted reformers, and *enemies* of Catholicity. Enmity to Catholi-

city was then a title to Irish estates, Irish honors, and Irish power—another pretence, to civilization in Ireland. By whom had she been made barbarian? Civilization from the hand of England! Civilization uniformly cultivated by the violation of every principle, public or private; of moral justice, of every feeling of humanity, of every bond of affinity, and of domestic union—all “according to the statute for such purpose made and provided.”

Betray your country, forswear your religion, and prosper, and be civilized. Such has been the principle of former Governments; at least, as history has handed it down to modern times.

Thus may be seen the infancy and growth, as it presents a substantial temporal form, of the Church of Henry VIII.—This relates to its state or temporal establishment merely—its dogmas or its doctrines do not find a place here.

Whether the sons of its present growth maintain the character given by Ovid of another race similar in descent—“*Scires e sanguine natos*,” must be referred to Mr. Cobbett’s annals of the battle of Skibbereen.

From this sketch of the growth and establishment of the Church of Harry VIII. may be referred its *instinctive character*.

The leading and irreducible passion of all individuals, who owe their power and their wealth to the violation of justice and humanity, is *fear*. But fear is the sister, the inseparable sister of *jealousy*; and no two personages who may have stood in that endearing relation, ever acted with more perfect cordiality than those two amiable properties, which have so eminently marked, in Ireland, the progress of the Church of Henry VIII.

There is not an Act of Parliament intended for the security of that Church, and prolific in pains and penalties on its supposed enemies, (enemies supposed because they had been robbed to enrich



that Church) there is not a practice of the Reverend and converted and converting Pastors of that Church, from the 28th year of the reign of Henry VIII., down to the latest of the Penal Laws, since the Revolution of 1688, which may not be traced to the trembling and the green-eyed Sisters, acting uniformly as the Guardians of the Holy Church, of the sacred Head of that Church of Henry VIII.

Shakspeare had the art to concentrate, in an individual character, a general passion, impelling classes of men. Fear and jealousy tormenting conscience, in all those who, in all times, have waded to power through blood and pillage, are drawn forth in the *individuality* of Macbeth :

“ ————— *The times have been,*  
 “ *That when the brains were out the man would die,*  
 “ *And there an end. But now they rise,*  
 “ *With TWENTY MORTAL MURDERS on their Crowns,*  
 “ *And push us from our stools.”*

Whether the Church of Henry VIII. now views the spectre of the Catholic Association with the same horrent fixedness of vision, as the Scottish Usurper viewed the obtrusion of Banquo, must be left to the imagination of those who may view that Association as holding up the mirror of Banquo’s descendant, “ showing many more ” while their “ BLOOD-BOLTERED COUNTRY smiles,” and points to them *as her own*. Look at the Penal Laws, those practical consequences from the paroxysm of fear and jealousy of the Church of Henry VIII. They may now be said to have been partially abrogated. But the very periods and manner of their partial abrogation, prove, even more strongly than their intrinsic spirit, their genuine parentage.

The inveteracy of some of their enactments was rendered less active (although nothing of their *principles* was affected) in the periods from 1779 to 1783, and in the year 1793—these two periods

having been marked by Church and State FEAR excited by the triumph—first, of the American, and lastly, of the French Revolution—proving thus, by her retrograde action, the paroxysm of sister fear, prevailing, *for the time*, over the rancour of sister *jealousy*.

Suppose, then, the prayer, (the prayer!) of a Catholic Petition for Emancipation alone be granted. Would the grant diminish the rigour, or lessen the influence of these governing passions?

*Answer.*—The Church and State had, after the Revolution 1688, erected, in the system of the Penal Laws, a strong fortress, in which, as they fondly hoped, they might, as a garrison, repose in security from the wandering Irish hords in that gifted land, which Church and State had turned into a desert.

Fear and jealousy might, in such a hopeful security, be supposed to abate somewhat of their anxiety.

But, if the prayer of the Catholic Petition be complied with, the legal effect will be, a transfer of the security of Church and State, from the scientific and regular fortress of the Penal Laws, to the irregular *discretion* of the prerogative of the Crown. The remnant of the bastions, curtains, ditches, ravelins and *covered* ways of the Penal Laws will be levelled, and the garrison of Church and State will be reduced to bivouac in an enemy's country—enemies so proclaimed by the Penal Laws—that garrison of Church and State in bivouac, with about six millions of *Irish Cossagues* hovering on their ravaged native soil—a race, active, hardy, and intelligent—some, from avarice and ambition, keen to share what avarice and ambition like to share—others, keen from vindictive pride, and, as they assert, justly nourished under the shade of their national degradation.

Will, under such a change of relations, *fear* and *jealousy*, be *extinguished*? and if not, will not the

*cause* of Catholic degradation remain, not with its former, but with increased vigour? If so, and that it should be no longer able to operate as at present—that is, by legal bars—will it not discover new modes of producing old effects? If so, what will be the new modes?

The garrison being deprived of its strong hold, will naturally look, as fear and jealousy will always look, for security in the weakness of their enemies. The exposed garrison will seek to amuse and to divide its enemy, *donner le change*, as old Frederic used to call his military stratagems.

This diversion will operate in several ways—

First, keeping, by every *indirect* and *secret* method, the enemy from power, by the further increase of knowledge\* or of property. This scheme cannot be prosecuted *directly*—it will profess to encourage, while it clandestinely embarrasses. But the grand operation will be the old one, of “*divide et impera*.” The bureau of the English Minister will be a market for *individual* Catholic *desertion* from the cause of Ireland, as it has been for Protestant Ascendancy *desertion* of the same cause.

Who, among that Ascendancy, “in any manner constituted are appointed to represent, or assuming or exercising a right to represent any part of the People of this realm, &c. &c.” ever received office or profit from an English Minister, but at the price of that desertion?

What Irishman, *in the possession of the favour of the Minister*, would now be trusted by his country? has not the Catholic Association itself entrusted the cause of Ireland in the crawling pe-

\* There is at present a strong proof of this indirect mode, as to the acquisition of knowledge. Parliament grants large sums of money for the purpose, *avowedly*, of the educating the people. But they entrust the management of the Fund to Trustees who take the most effectual method to embarrass the operation, and to counteract the effect—and, collaterally, to foment dispute.

tion of *six millions of People*, to English hands in both Houses ?

If that Catholic Association entrusted the cause of Ireland to English hands, from any motive but that of not being able to find trust-worthy Irish hands, that Catholic Association itself would not deserve to be trusted.

Fear and jealousy, as CAUSES of Catholic degradation *still* remain, and will remain, so long as, but no longer than, the State shall think that without its mystical union with the Church, it cannot maintain itself by its own integrity and justice, operating upon the integrity and justice of its People. No blame is intended to be cast upon an English Minister, as such, for being the purchaser, nor upon any wretched individual for being the seller in this traffic. The fault is in the system. Mr. Pitt said, "that as long as that system should remain, it was impossible for an English Minister to be an honest man." In that sentence spoke the great prophet of his own life.

The truth is, some individuals may benefit, in their private fortune, by what is called Catholic Emancipation taken *singly*—the Country never.

Catholic Emancipation has been pursued *singly*, not from deficiency of zeal or spirit in the pursuers, but from their not having taken, in ONE view, the position, the powers, and the interests of Ireland in all their extent, and in all their relations. That Ireland may *know herself*, must, now, therefore, be the object of future labour.

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Some apology, at least to decorum, may be due for the strong, and as some may think, for the coarse expressions in this Address, of robbery and murder. They were intended to describe the

transactions of times, since which, centuries have elapsed. Times which are now mere matter of historic recollection. "There be some," says an ancient writer, "that think that formalities do "always make the things themselves, and that " 'tis the Judge and the Crier that make the "*justice*, and the gaol the *criminal*." But the moralist and historian take views different from those of the Lawyer, and in the use of the terms of robbery and murder, the refinement of the philosopher, and the unsophisticated but sound understanding of the Peasant, agree, and arrive together at a moral point, which the involutions of the Lawyer never reach.

Henry the VIII. was, in every moral view, a murderer. And the seizures of property legally vested in individuals, without compensation to the individuals, is, morally, robbery.

Institutions may be overturned, but individual interests should not be sacrificed.

## LETTER IV.

“ Trust not for freedom to the Franks—

♦ “ They have a King who buys and sells ;

“ In native swords and native ranks,

“ The only hope of courage dwells.”

LORD BYRON.

*NOSCE teipsum* was the maxim of an ancient Sage.

But a Man is the creature of Society ; it is, in such a state, impossible for an individual to be considered as knowing himself, without he possesses a knowledge of those around him, of the Country in which he lives ; and, as the welfare of that Country contains the sources of his individual happiness, without a further knowledge of those external relations, by which the Peace, the Civilization, and the Independence of his Country may be effected. Without *power* to maintain *itself*, no Nation, in the way mankind have been, and are combined, can have *security*.

Without Security there cannot be Peace—without Peace there cannot be Happiness. But the *power* of any Society must be the result of a due ordinance of individual powers.

There is in DENON's account of the French Expedition to Upper Egypt, a descriptive passage which illustrates the effects, as to the power in Society, of due regulation and order:—“ It may be said,” says DENON, “ that the Egyptian is industrious “ and adroit. It is uncertain to what degree he “ might be rendered valiant ; but we are not to

“ see, without alarm, the military virtues he pos-  
 “ sesses : eminently sober, swift as a running  
 “ footman, a rider like a Centaur, a swimmer  
 “ like a Triton ; and yet it was over a Population  
 “ of *several millions of men* of this description, oc-  
 “ cupying four hundred miles of Country, that  
 “ four thousand insulated Frenchmen exercised  
 “ an absolute dominion ; so much is the habit of  
 “ obeying, like that of commanding, a peculiar  
 “ mode of being, a second nature, until the one,  
 “ dosing in the abuse of power, the other is awak-  
 “ ened by the clanking of its chain.”

This passage in DENON should inculcate to those  
 who boast of mere numbers as *power*, a lesson which  
 ought to be meditated over and over again. Num-  
 bers inordinate do not, in a Society, constitute  
*power*. They are the raw material of power ; but, like  
 other raw materials, useless—nay, cumbersome,  
 unless there be skill to work, arrange, and dress ;  
 the raw material, Man, is to be dressed, mentally  
 and bodily, by art at least, if not by science, to  
 the great ends of his being.

The weakness of the Egyptian, is the effect of a  
 civilized People having been, by despotism, de-  
 composed into the individuality of savage atoms,  
 from which it had been originally collected into  
 order. But such a People may be again recom-  
 posed. Individually they possess the native, but  
 rude, materials of Man in *uncontaminated vigour*.

There may exist a state of Society much more  
 hopeless. If a Society in its progress towards  
 civilization should be designedly arrested at a stage  
 when, while it still retained much of its savage  
 ferocity, had yet acquired some of the arts, and  
 with the arts some of the effeminacy of a higher  
 cultivation—if such a Society should have been  
 artfully wrought, *within itself*, into petty Factions—  
 first, of Political Feuds—second, of Religious  
 Rancour—the latter working the former into the  
 state of acid fermentation which corrodes every

principle of social happiness. Such a state of Society presents but little prospect of amendment, except the slow progress of breaking it up, and reducing it again to the state of savage atoms, whence may, once more, arise a new order, as the best orders of Society have formerly arisen, by building on the solid foundation of barbarism and hardy virtues.

It is not impossible, however, but that the enlarged principles of modern moral policy, if urged on by really virtuous intentions, may devise some shorter process of redemption, than the melancholy course which seems at first the only one. The experiment should at least be tried; and, as a first effort, let some attempt be made to draw the intellectual part of the *People of Ireland* to the subject.

If an effort were made to engage the People of Ireland, instead of fixing the whole of their attention on an internal succession of petty and unintelligible squabbles, to enlarge their views—first, to their own capacities and powers, if not as an *United People*, at least as a People possessing the raw material for a NATIONAL UNION, yet untried—then to the more extended relations on which they stand with the great Society of Mankind in general, and to the nearer relations with the surrounding Countries in particular—if, instead of devoting their faculties to the wretched controversies of Orange Ascendancy and of Catholic Debasement—disputes which readily resolve themselves into the elements of the theological rancour of opposing classes of Clergy, as teachers of Religious Tenets, and the petty emulation, the small ambition, and the grovelling avarice of a Laity for place and profit—if, instead of these disgraceful pursuits, (the more disgraceful as the more successful) the *People of Ireland* could be brought as ONE Body, to instruct themselves in their own capacities and their own powers, taken positively as to the Country itself, and considered



relatively to the capacities and powers of the neighbouring Nations—the Country, in such pursuits, might lay a foundation for its future independent happiness

At present few Nations seem less acquainted with the powers and capacities of their own Country, taken as a whole, or with the particular state of their Neighbours, or with the general state of Europe, than the Irish. Not deficient in feeling or curiosity, whence does this indifference arise?

“Where the greater malady is fixed the lesser “is scarce felt,” seems the true answer to the question. Invaded at one period, robbed at another, ruled by the cruel legerdemain of *divide et impera* in all, the Irish seem to have sunk into the degrading habit of contemplating only the load which galls them.

Habitually unconcerned to every event about him, a valetudinarian broods over his own maladies, and becomes querulous to those who are most disposed to assist him—in the moral habits, a necessary consequence of disease in the animal constitution, but, in a Nation, or an Individual, not an amiable or vigorous tendency of character.

This exclusive and almost impotent lamentation of their own state, is, in the Irish, a very unprofitable application of their feelings, and of their understanding.

At the *present period*, however, from the total want of unanimity in her People, and from the total want of *preparation*, even if the People were unanimous, the Cause of Ireland seems almost hopeless.

From the former wisdom either of the Foreign or Domestic Legislation of Ireland, (she was, by a whimsical combination of powers, subject to both) she scarcely ever obtained one institution of liberal policy, or even of local utility.

If formerly she ever obtained any measure even tending to the one or the other, it proceeded from an impulse of fear, not from the suggestions of justice.

In the principles of an enlightened policy, or even in a conception of its ultimate profit, her Rulers seem to have made little progress.

The present consequence of the concluding Victory in the late War, a Victory purchased by an overflow of Paper Money, which has not yet receded within the bounds of sound circulation, leaves, as yet, but little hope, that the former trembling Friend of Ireland should again be brought into action.

Emancipation of the Catholics, for which that portion of the Inhabitants of Ireland has not honored itself by petitioning, would not be the redemption of their Country.

Law may theoretically unbar the gates of *preferment* to the *humble Petitioners*; but *Church and State* will close them practically upon every individual who will not pay the toll of his servility as the condition of his admission, a legal elevation of the few, an additional force given to the instrument of the moral degradation and brutalising poverty of the many.

Even if Catholic Emancipation, *taken singly*, should produce all the effects, practically, which the most ardent expectants of place and profit look to; the more extensively it may gratify hope, the more powerfully will it *rivet* the UNION upon the galled back of their devoted Country. Every promoted, and every expectant Catholic will then become the advocate of the *Union*. *Catholic* mistake in receding from *Irish* opposition to the Union, first produced the Act. If from their Emancipation, the Catholics should be hereafter turned into the active supporters of the Union, Ireland will become, for the influence of England, a common Rail-way, suspended by *Chains of Iron*,

from the proud Arch of English Domination. At present the Act of Union is certainly a parchment tie ; it is Law ; how far a Municipal Law may be considered as possessing, or not possessing, any moral obligation, ought to be a subject of investigation.

Let it be supposed that the results of Catholic Emancipation were to be dealt out fairly to the Catholics of Ireland—what would be their station ?

Their station would be equal to that which is now occupied by the portion of their Countrymen, calling itself the Protestant Ascendancy.

What is that station ?

The mercenary and too obedient Servants of an *English* Minister, and the unfeeling tyrants of an Irish People. Look at the Turk—to-day, grovelling in the dust on the threshold of the Sublime Porte—to-morrow, wantoning in blood and pillage, the *Bashaw* of his distant Province.

Is this a situation which should be *petitioned* for by six millions of People, inhabiting the land of Ireland ? The individual Catholic who shall receive, or who may expect promotion, must take rank with the Protestant Ascendancy ; must adopt in politics its principles, and must in Ireland act upon those principles.

They do not *know themselves*—they do not *know their Country*, or they would not be Petitioners for such an object.

A Letter from Lord CLONCURRY has appeared in the Proceedings of the Catholic Association. In that Letter, the Noble Writer, with an intellectual courage always the produce of a manly understanding, has pointed out the real objects which *Irishmen*, and which, therefore, the Catholic Association, if they mean to identify the purity and safety of their Religion with the happiness and the independence of their Country, ought to pursue. No local or partial questions. The COMMON INTERESTS of Ireland ought to be bound

up together, and ought to be so bound as to be indivisible. The ruin of Ireland was attained by the simple process of her enemies having been enabled to distract her people, and to seduce them into the pursuit of separate objects. The Reformers of the North should make common cause as to Ireland with the Catholics of the South, and IRELAND INSULATED should be their UNION.

The conciseness necessary to a Letter of Business, prevented, it may be supposed, the Noble Writer from entering into any detail of the means to be adopted for the great ends which he so wisely pointed out. But such a detail should not be lost. The time of *Peace* is the true time for National Preparation. MILTON has put the question—

—————“ How War may be upheld,

“ More by her two main nerves, Iron and Gold,

“ In all her equipage ?”

But a much more important question, as to moral policy, arises in the present case—how the great and only legitimate end of War may be attained without recurrence to the tide of blood? That such an end may be attained by a due use of the time of Peace, and a due cultivation in that time, of those arts necessary for that great purpose, is possible.

The two great Liberators of America, were FRANKLIN and WASHINGTON.

But the pacific art of FRANKLIN was a more efficacious servant than even the military science and personal gallantry of WASHINGTON. The former received and deserved from his grateful Country the proud inscription of *Eripuit cælo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis*. Yet FRANKLIN never drew a sword, and was in the 70th year of his age, when he commenced his triumphant and his bloodless career.

It appears from the State Papers published in the Works of FRANKLIN, that America was *forced*, was dragooned into a War of *Defence*.

FRANKLIN appears always to have been the Advocate of Peace—that he negotiated, sought for, nay even *petitioned* for Peace—that he offered terms most honorable to England, and even humble to his country—the only answer was—“Unconditional Submission, and Military Execution.” But what was the Irish Union? The process of America reversed—first, the Military Executions of 1798—next, the Unconditional Submission of 1800.

There is a passage in a late Work of Mr. BENTHAM's, a passage which should never leave the Catholic mind :—“ It is only in the absence of “ *Interest* that Experience can hope to be regarded, “ or Reason heard. In the character of Sine- “ curists or over-paid Placemen, it is the interest “ of the Members of the English Government to “ treat the *majority* of Ireland on the double “ footing of Enemies and Subjects ; and such is the “ treatment in store for them to the extent of “ their endurance.”

Dublin, November, 1823.





